

Chicago coin shop leaves for suburb

By Roger Boye

One of Chicago's best-known coin shops has moved to a suburb after selling its mid-Loop office to ancient-coin dealer Harlan J. Berk.

"The business has changed for us over the years," said Jeff Bernberg, vice president of the Rare Coin Company of America (Rarcoa). "The small collector isn't coming downtown to shop anymore. We've been catering to clients at the higher end of the market, and that can be done from the suburbs."

Rarcoa had occupied the 31 N. Clark St. site since 1962. The company will continue to serve established customers from its new offices in Willowbrook and still will conduct its nationally known auctions and the annual Chicago International Coin Fair.

Meanwhile, Berk said he will deal in all types of coins and stamps—not just ancient coins—when he opens for business this week at 31 N. Clark St. with a 10-person staff.

"Our merchandise will range from coins made in 4,000 B.C. to freshly minted American Eagles," Berk said. "We'll cater to collectors and bullion buyers."

Berk, 46, has been a coin dealer since 1964 and has sold ancient coins and antiquities from a store at 612 N. Michigan Ave. since early 1987. He said one of his major challenges is moving his 6,500-volume library to Clark Street, a job he hopes to complete by Oct. 15.

The 31 N. Clark building has housed a coin store for nearly 40

years; from 1949 to 1962 the business was known as Ben's Stamp and Coin Co., Bernberg said.



A representative of the American Numismatic Association will authenticate and grade old coins—free of charge—next weekend during the annual convention of the Illinois Numisma-

tic Association.

Convention hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday at the Ramada Hotel O'Hare, 6600 N. Mannheim Road in Rosemont. Admission is free.

The INA convention last met in the Chicago area about 10 years ago.